



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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Part	Section	Title	Policy No.	Review Date
Institutional Services	Food Service	Special Diets	4.3.2	
ACA Standards	3-ALDF-4C-06 Special Diets (M); 3-ALDF-4C-07 Religious Diets			
Consent Decree	Paragraph 38 Special Diets			

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for Department of Corrections (DOC) personnel and vendor to follow in providing necessary medical and religious diets to inmates/detainees.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of DOC to provide inmates/detainees who have a legitimate medical or religious basis for a special diet with the means to fulfill those dietary needs, through the assistance of a nutritionist, medical professional and/or from a clergy for religious diets.

III. DEFINITIONS

Medical Diet - Specific foods and/or food preparation techniques that satisfy medical diet therapy (including dental) requirements as prescribed by a qualified health care professional.

Religious Diet - Specific foods and/or food preparation techniques that satisfy religious dietary requirements.

IV. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

Special diets should be kept as simple as possible and should conform as closely as possible to the foods served other inmates/detainees.

A. Special Diets

1. Medical Diets

- Medical diets may be prescribed by a physician or dentist as part of the patient's treatment.

- b. Only a qualified health care professional may approve a medical diet for an inmate/detainee. If an inmate/detainee wants a medically-related diet, they must obtain approval from a qualified health care professional.
- c. Medical diets will not be ordered to accommodate an inmate's food preference, special request, or religious preference.
- d. Medically-ordered supplemental snacks will be handled in the same manner as a medical diet.
- e. The cost and content of a medical diet may, if necessary, exceed that of the typical diet provided to inmates/detainees in the facility.
- f. Medical diets should not exceed thirty (30) days unless specified by the attending physician. Medical diets will be reviewed by the attending physician every thirty (30) days to determine whether the diet will be continued.
- g. To ensure that the inmate/detainee is receiving the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) and in accordance with the attending physician's recommendations, the food service manager or vendor will ensure that all special diets are reviewed by a registered or licensed dietitian.
- h. All medical diets prescribed by the attending physician will be made a part of the inmate/detainee medical records.
- i. An inmate/detainee may refuse a medical diet prescribed by the attending physician. In this instance, the inmate/detainee will sign a statement on the medical diet prescription or doctor's report that he/she is refusing the medical diet as prescribed. The attending physician should also make a notation on his/her report that after counseling on the importance and medical necessity of the medical diet, the patient refused the prescribed diet.

2. Religious Diet

- a. Inmates/detainees for whom the regular meal does not satisfy religious dietary requirements may request a religious diet meal as prescribed by the Chaplain of their religion.
- b. Religious diet prescriptions should be specific and complete, furnished in writing and rewritten monthly.
- c. Where religious holidays specify particular dietary requirements (e.g., Passover, month of Ramadan), special arrangements should be made so that inmates/detainees shall be able to adhere to their religious beliefs. Special occasion meals may not be approved more than once a year per religious group.

- d. The cost and contents of a religious meal generally may not exceed those of meals provided to the general population.
- e. Religious diets will be composed of regular staple foodstuffs unless specifically approved by a registered dietitian.
- f. In cases where special meal purchases appear to be unavoidably required, the food service manager or vendor, Commissioner and/or Director of Corrections and DOC legal counsel will meet and discuss the matter to determine appropriate plan of action.
- g. When an inmate/detainee is transferred to another facility, it is the inmate's/detainee's responsibility to notify food services staff that religious diet is being received at the previous facility.
- h. Inmate/detainee requesting that religious diet be cancelled must be made in writing and will be made effective immediately.
- i. An inmate/detainee who voluntarily requests that their religious diet be cancelled must wait one (1) year before requesting the current diet be reinstated, unless a change of religious affiliation is approved.

3. Removal From a Special Diet

- a. An inmate/detainee may be removed from a special diet program:
- b. When there is no longer a medical need.
- c. When the inmate/detainee no longer adheres to the religion involved.
- d. When a staff member observes the inmate/detainee failing to observe the dietary restriction. The staff member will inform the inmate/detainee of the observation and a report submitted to the Shift Commander of the incident.
- e. Inmate/detainee observed failing to adhere to medical diet will be referred to the attending physician for counseling before removal from the program. The same procedure will be followed for religious diets.

B. Special Management Housing

- b. Inmates/detainees in special management housing units retain the right to participate in the special diet program in accordance with this policy.
- c. In the interest of safety and security, the manner of food service and packaging may be modified.

C. Food Allergies

a. True food allergies are extremely rare. Individuals who have a true food allergy will usually have some systemic reaction consistent with allergy within 15 to 30 minutes of ingestion of the substance to which the person is allergic. The symptoms includes:

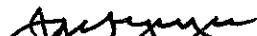
1. Throat closing.
2. Rashes.
3. Abdominal pain.
4. Bloody diarrhea.
5. Dizziness.

b. It should be noted that the following items should be of concern when evaluating food allergies: nuts, milk, eggs, wheat, shellfish and fish.

c. Inmates/detainees complaining about their food causing them allergies or appeared to be food contamination will be referred to a physician for further evaluation.

d. Inmates/detainees with true allergies as a result of medical diagnosis will have a medical prescription stating that the inmate/detainee is allergic to certain foods and therefore qualified to be on special diet if a particular food that causes allergic reaction to the inmate/detainee is served.

Prepared By:



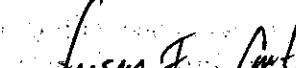
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11-20-07

Date

Deputy Director of Corrections

Reviewed By:

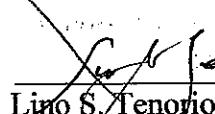
11/23/07

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